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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL KMDR KPAL KWBG KPAO IS
SUBJECT: JERUSALEM MEDIA REACTION (5/01): PUBLIC OWNERSHIP OF
RESISTENCE

Main Stories:

Ongoing Egyptian efforts to reach an Israeli-Palestinian truce receive extensive coverage on the front pages of the dailies. Al-Quds leads with the announcement that, "Egypt will inform Israel about the details of the truce in the coming days." According to the coverage, twelve Palestinian political and military factions have agreed in principle to accept a ceasefire with Israel. The dailies report that Palestinian leaders agreed that any agreement should be bi-lateral, apply to both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and include an end to the siege of the Gaza Strip. On the ground, the dailies report that a Palestinian was killed and five where injured in an Israeli airstrike on Gaza on April 29. The dailies also report that sewage has begun to flood Gaza City streets and warned of a humanitarian and environmental crisis.

The meeting of Saudi King Abdullah and Palestinian President Abbas on April 29 in Riyadh is front page news. The dailies report that both leaders discussed the latest developments regarding the "Palestinian cause" and the peace process in the region. President Abbas also briefed the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques on the outcomes of his recent visits to the USA and Russia, according to the coverage.

Comments made by Secretary Rice at the April 29 meeting of the American Jewish Committee in Washington received front page coverage in all dailies. Citing an AFP story, the dailies highlight that Rice stated, "Hamas is fighting on behalf of Iran against Israel." She further explained that Palestinian Hamas militants are serving

as "proxy warriors for an Iran bent on destroying Israel and destabilizing the Middle East[AFP]."
Citing AFP, the front page of Al-Quds reports that French President Sarkozy confirmed on April 29, that he would support Palestinian President Abbas' efforts to develop the Palestinian Territories.
President Sarkozy said that the security of Israel is linked to ending the Israeli occupation and establishing a viable, democratic and modern Palestinian state. A related report on Al Ayyam's front page quotes the British Council in Jerusalem saying that progress should be made in the areas of negotiations, the economy and freedom of movement," in order to support peace efforts.

The dailies report that the Israeli non-governmental organization B'Tselem has called upon the Israeli Army's Judge Advocate General to open a military police investigation into the circumstances of the death of a Palestinian mother and her four young children killed on April 29 by an Israeli shell in the northern Gaza area of Beit Hanun. The dailies also report that the Israeli military stated that Israeli soldiers are not responsible for the killing.

According to the dailies, the UN refugee organization OCHA issued a report stating that obstacles to movement in the West Bank increased to 612 following a detailed field survey completed on March 18. This represents an increase of 236 obstacles (62.8%) over the baseline figure of August 2005.

BLOCK QUOTES:

¶1. Independent Al-Quds ran its daily editorial entitled "Which map?!" (5/01): "Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni... presented the Palestinian negotiation team... an Israeli vision of a final

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agreement [as] a serious, official position presented through the main negotiation channel. This bizarre solution indicates complete Israeli control over large settlements in the West Bank and in Jerusalem as well as in the Jordan valley. This will go along with other security arrangements regarding [a mountain ridge between Jerusalem and Jericho]. The anger of Abu Ala' [Ahmad Quray, chief Palestinian negotiator] is not enough, even if it was necessary. We think that it is the right of our people to ask the head of our negotiation team to say what is going on in these negotiations in order to enlist the support of Arab and international public opinion on the side of the Palestinians against Israeli polices that will never lead to a solution and erase the tension that exists in the region. On the contrary, [the Livni plan] will make [the region] a center that is ready to explode into more violence and extremism. Israel, which is backed by Washington, should realize that peace has requirements and conditions that [must be followed and that not every agreement will] be accepted by any Palestinian Authority or any Palestinian official..."

¶2. Independent Al-Ayyam runs an op-ed by veteran columnist Abdullah Awwad, entitled "Which truce... which resistance and which negotiations?" (5/01): "...whoever claims to represent the Palestinian people should not try to stop resistance... whether by an agreement or a truce or a unilateral truce and this is a rule for all Palestinian parties. This right [to resist] belongs to the Palestinians people themselves. All agreements and truces do not prevent people who live under occupation from engaging in all means of resistance. Public ownership of resistance belongs to the people who are killed, burned, their children slaughtered, and their sons imprisoned daily. When Hamas talks about resistance and a truce, it is playing a misleading game... A truce basically means ending resistance and Hamas has no right to do this nor does any other party. Therefore, I am wondering what they are negotiating in Cairo?... this issue has only one explanation, each party has its own special calculation."

WALLES